It is not a fact that in order to minitor proper functioing and execution of the housing project of 515 flats, the Society constituted two Sub-Committees in the year 1986 and 1987. In order to protect the interest of the Society apart from the technical qualified Architect, who had been appointed by the Society, the Managing Committee of the Society in its meeting held on 5th March, 1986 constituted a Technical Advisory Sub-Committee to examine the reasonableness of the rates quoted by the various Contractors who submitted tender documents. The Technical Advisory Sub-Committee had failed to submit its report before the stipulated date fixed for negotiations with the tenderers for finalisations/ selection of contractor. Even then on the basis of comments of the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee, tender document were modified to the extent feasible before its acceptance. The award of the contract or the construction of 515 dwelling units was approved by the General Body in its meeting held on 18-3-1986.

Another Sub-Committee was constituted by the General Body in its meeting held on 21-12-1987 (i) to analyse the estimated cost of construction of various type of flats on the basis of actual expenditure already incurred and anticipated expenditure as worked out by the Society's Architect and (ii) to recommend economy in expenditure without affecting the specifications/quality of work and material.

The report submitted by the Committee was thoroughly discussed when the same was placed before the General Body Meeting held on 10-9-88. The General Body was fully satisfied with the action taken by the Society on the report of the Sub-Committee.

There has been no sub-standard execution of work and all the work carried out for and on behalf of the Society by the Contractor have been in accordance with the schedule of quantity and detailed specifications. It was also certified that the execution of work was done in accordance with the specifications in regard to quantity/quality etc. by the Architect.

In view of the position explained above, the broad recommendations of the Sub-Committees alongwith replies thereto of the Society are not required to be furnished.

Loss to NCCF due to supply of superior quality of rice

3178. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of officers responsible for shipping 2635 MTs of the PR-106 quality rice which is much costlier than IR-8 Quality;

(b) the total cost difference between PR-106 quality and IR-8 quality on the 2635 MT and loss suffered by federation due to this decision;

(c) the name of the authority who took this decision; and

(d) whether any action has been taken against the persons involved; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The name of the then Regional Manager (West) of NCCF who was incharge of the work of shipment of stocks was shri R. S. Lall.

(b) The landing cost for PR-106 was Rs. 2343.92 MT and that of IR-8 rice was Rs. 2319.30 PMT. The price difference works out of Rs. 13.82 lakhs. The stocks of PR-106 rice shipped in place of IR-8 rice, fetched export price of US$ 307 PMT equivalent to Rs. 3438 PMT which was higher

than the prevailing market price on which NCCF would have had to dispose of the same in the local market. The balance quantity of rain affected stocks was in fact sold locally@ Rs. around 2200/-PMT.

(c) This is being ascertained.

(d) The NCCF have filed a case in the High Court of Delhi against the Insurance Co. and the matter is *sub-judice*. Therefore no enquiry or investigation is possible at present.

Blind persons in the country

3179. SHRI NARESH C. PUGLIA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of blind persons in the country as at present;

(b) whether Government propose to secure jobs in the Government services as well as Central and State public undertakings and the private sectors; and

(c) what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI): (a) During 1981 National Sample Survey Organisation conducted a country-wide sample survey on disabled persons to arrive at reasonably accurate estimates of incidence and prevalence of disability in the country. According to this report it is estimated that 3.47 million persons were suffering from visual disabilities in the country.

(b) and (c) 1% Vacancies in Group 'C' and 'D' have been reserved in the Central Government Services and comparable posts in Central public Undertakings for the Visually Handicapped. Majority of State Governments/Union Territories have also extended similar reservations in States Services. In addition special employment exchanges, special Cells in normal Employment Exchanges, Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for physically handicapped have been set up through out the country for rehabilitation of handicapped including the blind. Through other various schemes/programmes handicapped including blind are benefited in self-employment ventures such as allotment of shops, kiosks by States/ Union Territories and loans given by the banks.

Reservation of jobs in educational institutions for disabled persons

3180. SHRI NARESH C. PUGLIA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Federation of blinds has demanded a National law on reservation of jobs and seats in the Educational institutions for the blinds and disabled;

(b) what action Government have taken on their demands;

(c) whether the Federation has made other demands; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI): (a) to (d) During 1987 Ministry of Welfare set up a Committee Under the Chairmanship of Shri Baharul Islam to suggest legislation for the welfare of handicapped. The Committee had suggested certain constitutional amendments, reservation in employment both in public and private sector, vocational training institutions, certain miscellaneous provision inludings fiscal concessions and special pay to the teachers etc. National Federation of the Blind, a Voluntary organisation is demanding legislation in the areas suggested by the Baharul Islam Committee.